

## Lab targets low cost, improved fiber optic networks

*by Fran Crumb, Information Directorate*

ROME, N.Y. — The Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate recently awarded a two-year, \$2,533,200 contract to Picolight Inc. of Boulder, Colo., to develop a low-cost, high-performance fiber optic communications system.

“The new system, used for networking applications, is based on using slightly different versions of the same laser structure as light sources,” said Paul F. Sierak, program

manager in the directorate’s Information Grid Division. “Each light source produces a different color, which carries different information streams – in parallel – over a single fiber.”

“Because variations of the same laser are used, the cost of each will decrease, enabling lower cost networks with high performance to become available, especially within the Internet arena,” Sierak said. @